

January 11, 2021

Dear Legislators:

Washington is facing unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19 and the resulting economic impacts. Nearly all areas of government services are being strained, including our transportation systems. Our state faced transportation funding gaps prior to the pandemic and those challenges have only been exacerbated, with disproportionate impacts on low-income communities and communities of color.

As we begin to look toward economic recovery, we must ensure our transportation system is able to support that recovery equitably. Based on the most recent revenue forecast, the State's Transportation budget has a projected shortfall of \$758 million for the next three years. To address that issue, to support the full reopening of our economy as well as spur economic activity and support local jobs, we urge the Legislature to pass a comprehensive transportation funding package in 2021.

We understand there are various approaches to a transportation package being considered. We look forward to being part of the conversation and working toward a broad-based solution that includes:

- **Prioritization of maintenance and preservation projects.** We have a significant backlog of deferred maintenance projects that threaten the reliability and safety of our transportation system. WSDOT estimates that the cost to preserve the State transportation system at the minimum acceptable level is \$8.1 billion over the next 10 years. Increasing funding for maintenance and preservation projects not only improves the system but also benefits local communities throughout the state. Through these investments we have the opportunity to stimulate the economy and support local jobs.
- **Critical projects.** There is an ongoing need for important projects such as replacements for the current I-5 bridge over the Columbia River, the Highway 2 trestle, the West Seattle Bridge and other projects necessary to meet transportation policy goals.
- **Culverts.** The need to fund removal of fish passage barriers is not an option, it is a legal obligation mandated by a federal court order of approximately \$3.4 billion between 2021 and 2030.
- **Invest in a strong interconnected multimodal transportation system.** Ensuring the continuity and completion of our multimodal systems around the state is paramount for our essential workers, most vulnerable populations, and the post-pandemic workforce. State investments in transit, bike and pedestrian service and capital needs will be necessary to facilitate a strong economic recovery by creating jobs and assisting workers to return to their work sites.
- **Finish what we've started.** In 2015, the Legislature adopted Connecting Washington - a \$16 billion, 16-year transportation investment plan, multimodal investments and projects in key economic corridors. Many of those projects are already underway or set to begin soon. We should prioritize keeping those projects on track and protecting the jobs they support.
- **Include new revenue streams.** We understand that new revenue streams will likely be necessary in any new transportation package. We look forward to working through these options with you.

Our coalition – business leaders, labor unions, local governments and environmental and transit advocates – has worked together for more than 15 years for investments in our transportation system. We know that a healthy transportation system supports economic activity, jobs and quality of life for all Washingtonians.

We urge action in 2021 to support our economic recovery as well as local jobs.

350 Washington Network
ACI - Active Construction Inc.
Adams County Development Council
AGC of Washington
Alaska Airlines
Alliance for Pioneer Square
Amazon
American Council of Engineering Companies of Washington
Association of Washington Business
Audubon Washington
Bellevue Chamber
Capital Aeroporter
Christensen, Inc.
City of Bellevue - Lynne Robinson, Mayor
City of Black Diamond – Carol Benson, Mayor
City of Blaine
City of Covington
City of Everett
City of Fife
City of Issaquah
City of Kenmore – David Baker, Mayor
City of Kent – Dana Ralph, Mayor
City of Kirkland
City of Lake Stevens - Brett Gailey, Mayor
City of Lakewood - Don Anderson, Mayor
City of Newcastle
City of North Bend – Rob McFarland, Mayor
City of Pasco
City of Redmond
City of Renton - Armondo Pavone, Mayor
City of Seattle
City of Shoreline
City of Snoqualmie
City of Tacoma
City of Tukwila
Climate Reality Project - Washington State Coalition
Climate Solutions
Columbia River Economic Development Council
Cowlitz Economic Development Council
CRH Americas Materials
Disability Mobility Initiative
E.E. Overton Company
Economic Alliance Snohomish County
Fred Meyer Stores
Greater Redmond Transportation Management Association
Greater Seattle Partners
Greater Spokane Inc.
HDR

HNTB

Identity Clark County

Impact Washington - NIST MEP

International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 302

International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 612

Jamestown S'Kallam Tribe

Kent Chamber of Commerce

King County

Laborers International Union of North America

Maple Valley Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce

Maul Foster & Alongi, Inc.

Microsoft

MLK Labor

Next Bold Move Consulting

Nichols Brothers Boat Builders and Everett Ship Repair

NW Carpenters Union

NW Natural

OneAmerica

PEMCO Insurance

Port of Bellingham

Port of Seattle

PRR

Recreational Boating Association of Washington (RBAW)

Renton Chamber of Commerce

Sanitary Service Company

Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Share the Cities

Sound Cities Association

South Sound Chambers of Commerce Legislative Coalition

Spokane Area Good Roads Association

Symetra Life Insurance Company

The Climate Reality Project - Washington State Coalition

The Wilderness Society

Transportation Choices Coalition

Vigor

Virginia Mason Medical Center

Vulcan Inc.

WA & Northern Idaho District Council of Laborers

Washington Asphalt Pavement Association

Washington Bikes

Washington Building and Construction Trades Council

Washington Conservation Voters

Washington Economic Development Association

Washington Environmental Council

Washington Public Ports Association

Washington Recreation and Parks Association

Washington Roundtable

Washington State Labor Council

Washington State Patrol Lieutenants and Captains
Association

Washington State Patrol Troopers Association

Washington State Transit Association

Washington Trucking Associations

Wright Runstad & Company

WSP USA